



*Planning for Tomorrow*

York Region Growth Management

# Towards a Sustainable Region

**York Region Open House – Feedback**  
**May 9, 2007**  
**Aurora**



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The following comments, questions and suggestions are a summary of public input at the consultation session in the Town of Aurora. Regional Staff attempted to answer questions and provide additional input. Please contact the Region if this summary does not adequately reflect your input or ideas or if you have additional thoughts.



# Discussion



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- Concern with regard to the state of Aurora's downtown core
- Growth changes can provide opportunity to revitalize the downtown areas (eg. Woodbridge Core, Village of Markham)
- Need plan to mandate "green" development
- East Gwillimbury has policy that housing be built to Energy Star standard, and institutional/industrial buildings will be built to LEED standard (staff comment)



# Discussion



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- Can green development be mandated at a Regional level?
- Concern with regard to how new housing forecasts are going to be accommodated; whitebelt areas may not be enough.
- Concern with regard to St. John's Sideroad reconstruction (width)
- Roads must be built to respect natural environment
- Provincial plan requires that whitebelt be developed in a very compact standard, YR has identified that to accommodate the forecasted population in the whitebelt, 66% of the whitebelt lands are needed (staff comment)



# Discussion



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- Appropriate scale of development must be addressed
- Concern with regard to the planning time frame (25 years) may not be enough to address long term planning needs; particularly in relation to ecological systems



# Discussion



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- Fiscal impact needs more emphasis particularly with respect to the aging population
- Human services planning is a key component
- Need to address water as an element of natural heritage; protection of aquifers is essential (inter-basin systems)



# Discussion



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- Concern with respect to congestion and pace of infrastructure in relation to growth (road congestion and water restrictions)
- Concern that intensification can bring crime,
- Affordable housing needs to be addressed
- Mixed use; live-work accommodations needs to be addressed
- The level of intensification for Aurora is too high
- The preliminary forecast for intensification in Aurora (2800 unit over 25 years) is the lowest of the 5 municipalities in York Region (Aurora, Markham, Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Newmarket (staff comment))



# Discussion



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- Agricultural industry should be included as a component of the strategy
- Affordable housing is a key issue in York Region where the average home price is \$430K. Need to ensure that we have housing options for all residents
- Concern with respect to the reconstruction of GW Williams; connection with YRDSB for forecasting population



# Discussion



- How binding is the Provincial Plan? How is conformity to the Plan ensured?
- Concern with respect planning for infrastructure needs (water servicing)
- We should not be approving additional growth if we have summer water restrictions now.
- We need to have strong and clear policies that are defensible
- Concern with respect to the possibility of intervention of OMB on municipal planning decisions



# Discussion



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- Infrastructure Master Planning 30-40 year plans. Important to get involved and participate in infrastructure master plans
- Seniors issues need to be addressed; affordable housing, high quality of life, access to facilities and services
- York Region has housing corporation to service seniors and affordable housing needs. Provincial and Federal support for affordable housing is needed (staff comment)

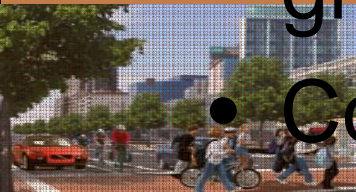


# Discussion



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- York Region did not listen to Aurora's concerns about the proposed new water tower on Bloomington Road.
- Concern that facilities (recreational) cannot keep up with the pace of residential growth. This is essential for quality of life
- Who is mandating that we will be growing?
- Concern with respect to OMB



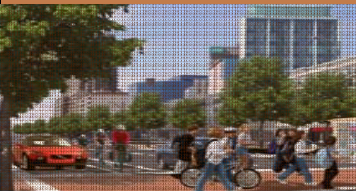
# Discussion



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- What is the Relationship between regional and local planning,
- Concern that Aurora only has one voice at Regional Council
- Can Aurora decide that it doesn't want to accommodate any growth
- Relatively little growth is forecasted for Aurora (2C lands and some intensification) in relation to other YR municipalities (staff comment)
- A 20,000 increase in population is too much for Aurora.
- There may be some opportunity to limit growth, however, there are a number of planning approvals in place, and the expansion in Aurora (2C) is before the OMB
- Concern with respect to the ability for Aurora to be able to accommodate more growth



# Discussion



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- Planning should be done on a watershed basis; aligned with natural boundaries
- Should address drinking water sources and protect water supplies
- Earlier and more fulsome involvement of public in the planning process

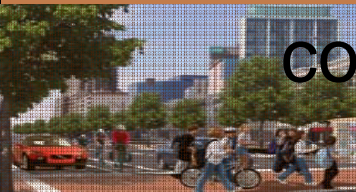


# Discussion



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- Planning for Baby boomers will have impact on our communities in order to plan for housing needs, social needs, etc.
- Greenspace (parks and natural spaces) needs to be addressed in planning which needs to be integrated into communities; makes higher quality of life
- 5% Parkland dedication requirement of the Planning Act; new communities will have more greenspace than currently (staff comment)

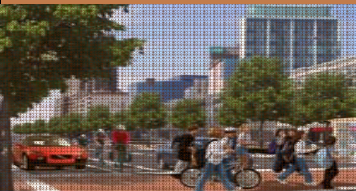


# Discussion



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- Greenspace must be integrated into the community and must be accessible
- Infrastructure (water and sewer) is needed to accommodate growth
- Comprehensive infrastructure plans are being prepared to determine how the growth will be accommodated (staff comment)



# Discussion



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- Who is responsible to ensure that growth will occur in a sustainable manner
- We need a strategy to ensure that new communities will be developed differently (i.e., address sustainability)
- York Region needs to work collaboratively with local municipalities to ensure the vision is achieved by creating policies which addresses concerns

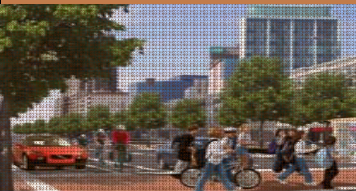


# Discussion



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- The discussion of these issues is not over, we will keep residents informed as we go forward, and will have an opportunity for further input and comment (staff comment)
- Natural heritage features need to be identified

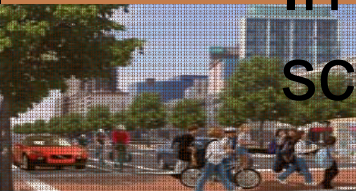


# Discussion



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- Arterial traffic congestion needs to be addressed; particular concern with the traffic at Yonge and Wellington and the impact on Aurora's downtown core
- Traffic should be re routed around Yonge Street core.
- York Region should not have placed a reservoir on natural heritage lands on Bayview avenue (Anne Bartley Smith Lands)
- In the future meetings like this should be scheduled for Aurora. We want our say.

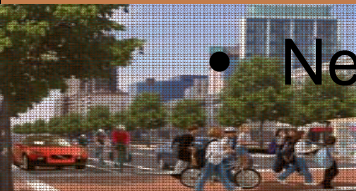


# Discussion



## Planning for Tomorrow York Region Growth Management

- Key questions in the Region's Planning and Economic Development Committee Meeting report on Growth (April 4, 2007) are;
  - Are we prepared to accept and endorse the Provincial forecast of 1.5 million people at this time?
  - Is the 40% Intensification target achievable? Is it desirable?
  - Are we prepared to accept and endorse the pace of growth as it is forecasted? This includes both the number of households and the greenfield take-up proposed.
  - How do we want our Whitebelt Areas to be developed? How will infrastructure and the natural heritage system be integrated:
  - To meet the Province's forecast boundary expansions in some municipalities will have to be considered as part of this Growth Management exercise.
  - How will Whitebelt development be phased across the Region?
  - Are we able to meet the proposed forecasts while maintaining fiscal responsibility?
  - How will we monitor growth?
  - How will we measure intensification?



- Need to continue to have dialogue on these issues